

Town of West Hartford
Conservation and Environment Commission
Meeting Minutes: 11/28/2016

Present: Commissioners: Brian McCarthy, Jessica Schaeffer-Helmecki, Emilee Scott, Stephanie Wnuck, Ryan Langan, Scott Sebastian, Katie Reilly

Events/New: New Commission members Emilee Scott and Jessica Schaeffer-Helmecki were introduced to the commission.

Old business: Ryan Langan offered a motion to approve the minutes from the July meeting. Approved unanimously.

New business:

- 1) **35 Walker Lane Application (IWW #1051): Elizabeth Garner and Theresa MacKinnon, Record Owners are requesting approval of an Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Permt to conduct certain regulated activities which may have an adverse impact on a wetland regulated area. The applicant proposes to construct an approximately 38' by 21' in-ground swimming pool with safety gate and 3' wide concrete perimeter. (Submitted for IWWA receipt on December 5, 2016)**

Brian Juliano of Juliano's Pools presented the application and proposed installing a pool at the residence at 32 Walker Lane – note discrepancy between application which read 35 Walker Lane and Mr. Juliano's notes that read 32 Walker Lane.

Mr. Juliano explained the installation of the pool is an estimated 10 day project, and will begin as soon as approval is granted, following the 15 day review/commentary period. The new pool will have a maximum depth of six feet and is not located in the wetland. The pool will be located in the review area, 35 feet from the wetland according to the map provided. The proposed area currently serves as the rear lawn of the property. Mr. Juliano advised he did not see any standing water in the wetland area, and suspected that is due to the recent drought, but he has contingency plans if they do encounter groundwater during the excavation. The pool will have one underwater light located 3 feet below water level. Following construction of the pool, Mr. Juliano will install a fence that is four inches higher than code.

Mr. Juliano described the access route approach as coming up the driveway, crossing in front of the house and staying to the left of the house. One oak tree, roughly 21-inches in diameter, will need to be removed. Mr. Juliano does not have plans to replace this oak tree, but will add in ornamental shrubbery, including a Japanese maple tree. Mr. Juliano noted they do not stockpile debris, but will remove any debris via truck and take it to his shop in Vernon, CT.

Equipment used for this project will include a Bobcat and Excavator. The CEC recommends a stipulation for this project to use a track pad to prevent tracks. Mr. Juliano advised he was comfortable with this stipulation and would use a 1.25" crush stone track pad. The CEC was

satisfied with the location of sedimentation and erosion control fencing to be used during the construction of the pool.

- 2) **107 Hillcrest Avenue Application (IWW #1049) by AECOM on behalf of The Metropolitan District (MDC) (Central Connecticut Associates, LLC, record owner) requesting approval of a map amendment to the Official Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Map of the Town of West Hartford for property located at 107 Hillcrest. The proposed amendment is based on an on-site soil survey prepared by a professional soil scientist. (Submitted for IWWA receipt on December 5, 2016. Suggest required public hearing be scheduled for January 4, 2016.)**

As a summary of the Tunnel project, Brian McCarthy of CDM Smith presented the background summary of the Overflow South Tunnel Clean Water Project. The project includes five contracts. They have just started construction on the South Tunnel and the project is estimated to take 12 to 18 months to reach Talcott road. They will construct pipes at the corner of Hillcrest and New Britain Avenue.

Mr. Sankar Ganesh from AECOM explained a soil scientist tested the soil and they propose revising the wetland boundaries to extend further north than currently represented on the town of West Hartford Wetland Map. The Town's current map only includes the watercourse adjacent to the construction area

David Laiuppa, soil scientist, presented regarding wildlife disturbance. He explained there are lots of invasive species present in the area, and the location is not "ideal wetland." Songbirds may be disturbed due to the removal of trees, but for the most part Mr. Laiuppa identified this area as "minor wildlife value." After construction, they will replant native species but will leave a stabilized construction entrance in place as an access point for MDC. There is an apartment complex to the north of this area. The owner of the apartment complex has been notified and they understand MDC has an outreach plan for apartment residents.

The CEC agrees with the extension of the wetland to the north in this area (Emilee Scott recused herself).

- 3) **107 Hillcrest Avenue- Application (IWW #1050) by AECOM on behalf of The Metropolitan District (MDC) (Central Connecticut Associates, LLC, record owner) requesting approval of an Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Permit to conduct certain regulated activities which may have an adverse impact on a watercourse (Piper Brook). The applicant proposes construction of the Newington Trunk Sewer High Outlet Relief (NTS HOR) Structure. No direct impacts to wetland or watercourse resources will occur as a result of the proposed modification plan. (Submitted for IWWA receipt on December 5, 2016.)**

The Newington Trunk Sewer drains all of Newington and typically overflows about eight times each year into Piper Brook. This is located right on the West Hartford/Newington town line so they will also be presenting before the Newington commission. They will replace the Newington Trunk Sewer with a new High Outlet Relief Structure and dropshaft. This structure will have a way to relieve water pressure from the system manually, as in the current structure. The construction is adjacent to the unnamed watercourse adjacent to Piper Brook.

Mr Ganesh of AECOM explained the staging area of materials for the project would be juxtaposed the wetland, and workers would access the staging area from the Newington side due to the sloped topography on the West Hartford side of the watercourse. A contractor would still have to grade the area during construction. In doing so, they will have to remove small trees and shrubs, but have identified four trees that are larger than 24 inches in diameter that they remain in-place.. The construction will continue for one month and they will use an anti-tracking pad as well as dust mitigation strategies. They will be installing a new pipe at the end of Hillcrest and will extent it to New Britain Avenue. They will also put a fence around the area for security purposes.

Appropriate erosion controls will be used in the construction. CEC has no concerns with the work proposed in this area (Emilee Scott recused herself).

4) **Wintonbury Land Trust Presentation**

Representatives (Dale Bertoldi, Michelle Benoni, Vicky Resti), from the Wintonbury Land Trust of Bloomfield, Connecticut, were present to give a required presentation of their intentions to acquire the West Hartford Land Trust parcels and subsequently dissolve the West Hartford Land Trust. They explained the President and Treasurer of the West Hartford Land Trust have met with them and communicated that they are no longer able to manage the West Hartford Land Trust's five properties and have approached them as well as the Farmington Land Trust about relinquishing these properties. Wintonbury representatives explained they are interested in learning about what kind of support they can expect from the CEC as well as the town residents.

Wintonbury Land Trust's approach over the past several years has been to make the properties relevant to the community and have had success with micro-farms and building trail systems. They also provide education for young people about the environment. The Wintonbury Land Trust is currently made up of an all-volunteer eight member Board, and they have 120 dues-

paying members. They host two fundraisers a year to help maintain their current properties and acquire new properties.

The representatives emphasized they are just in an exploratory phase and wanted to do their due diligence before deciding whether to move forward merging the Wintonbury Land Trust and the West Hartford Land Trust. They would need participation, both member involvement/volunteers and board members, from West Hartford residents to make this a possibility. They do not want this to be seen as a “takeover” but as a move toward regionalism.

The CEC thanked the Wintonbury Land Trust representatives for their presentation and would include Wintonbury with a copy of the meeting minutes. The CEC communicated to Mr. Bertoldi that another meeting regarding the potential acquisition seemed appropriate and that the CEC would also provide their own due diligence to this matter.

- 5) Scott Sebastian offered a motion to adjourn. Approved unanimously.